



Intro to Flexibility



Total Fitness Series
Flexibility Training

What are we going to cover ?

- Basic Definitions
- Benefits of Flexibility
- Exercise Prescription
- Principals
- Introduction of Stretching Exercises



Basic Definitions



- Flexibility - maximum ability to move a joint through a range of motion
- Range of Motion - maximum amount of movement that a joint allows
- Stretching - the act of lengthening the structures controlling movement of the joint

Flexibility Training, What are the benefits?

Prevents Injuries

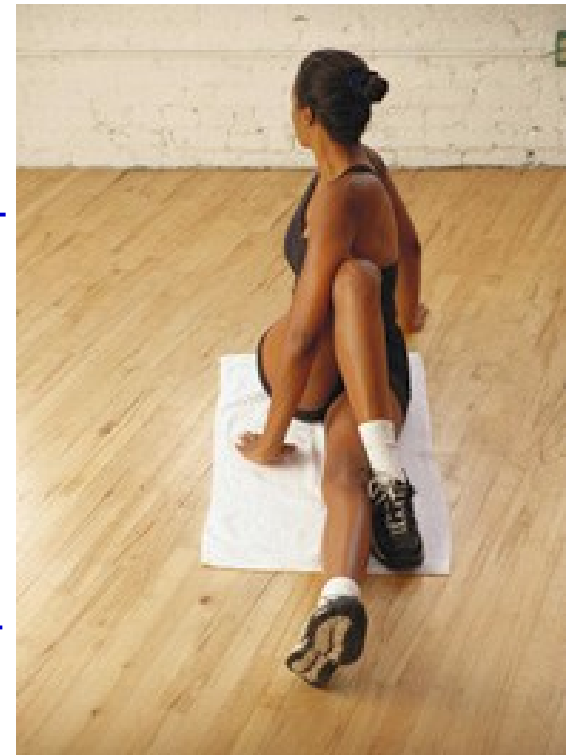
- A flexible muscle is more likely to stretch and give when put into a strained position. This will reduce the chance of muscle pulls and tears.



Flexibility Training: Benefits Continued

Prevents muscle imbalances and postural deviations

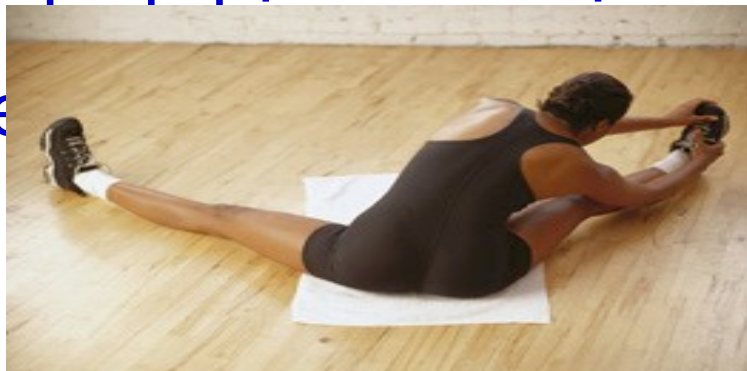
Flexibility in the lower back and hamstring area is very important. Lack of flexibility in these areas is associated with the development of chronic lower back pain and can greatly reduce your score on the sit and reach test.



Flexibility Training: Benefits Continued

Important for maximizing performance

- Flexible muscles and joints are less likely to be injured when strained during exercise or activity.
- Performing flexibility training between sets will increase strength training.



Other Flexibility Benefits...

- Reduces muscular tension
- Assists in the ease and coordination of movement
- Eases transition into high intensity activities
- Improve sit and reach score
- Improves circulation
- Relaxes the body
- Prime reliever of



Flexibility Training Guidelines

- **Days:** at least three times a week.
- **Warm-Up:** the muscles should be warm prior to stretching, a few minutes of light exercise or even a warm shower will work.
- **Intensity:** stretch each muscle until tension is mild, then pause.
- **Time:** hold each stretch for 15 to 30 seconds.
- **Reps:** perform each stretch 3 to 5 times.
- **Performed:** do light stretching to warm-up prior to each exercise session. Otherwise, stretching can be performed at any time.



Flexibility Program

Flexibility Training Guidelines

| Stretch | Muscles Group(s) | #of Sets / Reps | Hold Stretch For | Rest |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| Neck Stretch | Neck Muscles | 1 Set of 3-5 Reps | 15-30 Seconds | No Rest Between Stretches |
| Tricep Stretch | Triceps | | | |
| Upper Back Stretch | Rhomboids Teres Major | | | |
| Chest and Bicep Stretch | Pectorials and Biceps | | | |
| Butterfly Stretch | Groin | | | |
| Calf Stretch | Gastrocs and Soleus | | | |
| Hamstring Stretch | Hamstrings | | | |
| Lower Back Stretch | Erector Spinae | | | |
| Quadriceps Stretch | Quadriceps | | | |
| Back Extension Stretch | Abdominals | | | |

Flexibility Principals

- What happens when you stretch?
- When should you do stretching?
- What types of stretching will increase your flexibility?
- Aging and Flexibility



What happens when you stretch?



- When a muscle is stretched the body resists and initiates a “Stretch Reflex”. Your body actually fights your efforts to stretch and your muscle will feel tight. If you hold the stretch for short periods of time (30 sec) the body will start to relax and you can increase your stretch.

When should you do stretching exercises?

- Warm up
- Cool down
- After periods of long sitting or inactivity (road trips, work)
- After waking up in the morning



What types of stretching will increase your flexibility?

- Static Stretching - stretching using slow, controlled stretches being held in position for a period of time (Butterfly Stretch)
- Dynamic Stretching - repeated, fluid, gentle dynamic range movements (swinging a bat or jumping rope)



Aging and Flexibility

- Flexibility diminishes with age
- Stretching and exercise can slow decline in flexibility
- Improvements in flexibility through stretching can be achieved at any age



Have a great workout!!



NAVY *Fitness*

